



## Integrated Employment Project

In Arizona, competitive, integrated employment is a limited option for persons with Developmental Disabilities (DD). While many persons with DD find jobs in supported employment, the progression from a supported job to one in a fully integrated environment is difficult to achieve, leaving many without an opportunity to work competitively for wages or benefits.

Based on the principles of Public Law 106-402, *The Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000*, the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council is seeking to enhance integrated employment opportunities for persons with DD, to allow for additional inclusion while increasing capacity and bringing about system change.

Research of existing resources and compiling data in a useful manner is a key component of this project.

Research areas may include:

- Research and evaluation of estimated numbers of persons with DD that may be capable of competitive, integrated employment;
- Research integrated employment among other states to benchmark or rank Arizona in its rate of integrated employment available to persons with DD.
- Research integrated employment among high performing states to identify best practices that may be applicable to Arizona.
- Identify best practices that are working in Arizona among employers offering integrated employment to persons with developmental disabilities.
- Research and evaluation of the kinds of supports that are typically necessary to successfully match persons with DD to fully integrated jobs;
- Trends in hiring by types of employment that match the abilities and employment skills of persons with developmental disabilities;
- Employers within Arizona differentiated by size and location that due to operational philosophies and established business plans may be inclined to consider employment of persons with developmental disabilities to diversify their workforce.
- Employer attitudes and fears, based on perceived or actual risks that interfere with considering employment of persons with developmental disabilities.
- A comprehensive review of all state and federal programs and resources that are available to and necessary for persons with DD in order to become potential candidates for employment;
- Necessary community infrastructure resources that must be available to support persons with DD in successfully finding and maintaining integrated employment and an evaluation by geographic region, counties, and cities/towns of the accessibility of these resources.
- Resources available to employers, in the forms of tax credits or other financial and support incentives that could result in the hiring of additional persons with DD;
- Development of models that when implemented within Arizona, will facilitate consideration of persons with DD maximizing existing structures and resources currently in place;
- Recommendations for system change that will enhance the potential for integrated employment, pertinent to the current economic and political environment.

The anticipated outcomes for this project include:

1. A final report in varied formats providing detail on the research items described above that can be distributed to employers, persons with DD and their families, professionals and public policy decision makers.
2. Development of models that can be implemented to initiate pilot projects to increase integrated employment.
3. Continued involvement of the researcher in updating information and supporting concepts developed in the final product.